

began the horrible excesses in the territory of La Vendee, and in April, 1793, came the announcement that the French Republic had declared war against England and had commissioned to the United States a new Minister who represented the extreme type of the revolutionary movement.

The partiality of the Federalists for England and of the Republicans for France now clearly announced itself through the entire country. The Republicans recognized beneath the atrocities of the movement a contest between the monarchy and the democratic principles of government; and the sympathies of a large part of them were not to be extinguished because of excesses which they regarded as inevitable in the transition from despotism to freedom. It was a political necessity that as between England and France the United States should remain neutral, and Washington was fully alive to the fact. He hastened from Mount Vernon and laid before his Cabinet a list of questions for immediate settlement. Jefferson then described the consultation:

"The first question, whether we should receive the French Minister, Genet, was proposed, and we agreed unanimously that he should be received; Hamilton at the same time expressing his great regret that any incident had happened which should oblige us to recognize the government. The next question was, whether he should be received absolutely, or with qualifications. Knox submitted at once to Hamilton's opinion that we ought to declare the treaty void. I was clear it remained valid. Randolph declared himself of the same opinion but agreed to take further time to consider. We determined unanimously the last question, that Congress should not be called.

"On May 16th the President told me he had never a doubt about the validity of the treaty, but that since the question had been suggested he thought it ought to be considered; that it being done, I might now issue passports to seagoing vessels in the form, prescribed by the French treaty."

The Cabinet agreed unanimously that the President should issue a proclamation of neutrality. This proclamation drew